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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/556,726	04/21/2000	Paul J. Thompson	760-24 DIV 2	6657

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[REDACTED] EXAMINER

PREBILIC, PAUL B

[REDACTED] ART UNIT

[REDACTED] PAPER NUMBER

3738

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2002

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/556,726	THOMPSON, PAUL J.	
	Examiner Paul B. Prebilic	Art Unit 3738	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 January 2002.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 19,20 and 22-26 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 19 and 20 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 22-26 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

The continuing data should indicate the serial number of the grandparent application. Presently, only the patent number of that application is listed.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

- (a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.
- (e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Myers et al (WO 95/05132). Myers et al discloses a braided stent (see Figure 9) intimately bound (see Figure 8) to a biaxially expanded PTFE graft; see the whole document. For this reason, the claim language is fully met because the stent and graft would inherently expand and contract together such that the expansion ratios thereof would be virtually the same.

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Myers et al (US 5,700,285). Myers et al discloses a braided stent (see Figure 9) intimately bound (see Figure 8) to a biaxially expanded PTFE graft; see the whole document. For this reason, the claim language is fully met because the stent and graft would inherently

expand and contract together such that the expansion ratios thereof would be virtually the same; in other words, the expansion ratios would less than 25% as claimed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Banas et al (US 5,749,880) in view of Wallsten (US 4,954,126). Banas et al discloses many stent types (see column 12, line 49 et seq.), which can be bonded to uniaxially expanded PTFE with no nodules (only nodes, see Figure 18A to 19B). However, Banas fails to specifically disclose using a braided stent as claimed. Wallsten, however, teaches that it was known to the art to make braided self-expanding stents. Hence, it is the Examiner's position that it would have been obvious to use a braided self-expanding stent, as taught by Wallsten, for the same reasons that Wallsten desires the same and so that self-expansion and even distribution of pressure can be brought to the Banas et al device.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 22-26 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed January 3, 2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that Myers does not teach internodal shortening. However, the Examiner posits that internodal shortening is inherent as explained in the rejection. Specifically, Myers has biaxially and multiaxially expanded films of PTFE (see column 3, lines 56-65) intimately bound with the stent. The stent is a braided stent so it will shorten upon radial expansion. When this happens, since the PTFE is intimately bound thereto and since the PTFE is multiaxially expanded, the PTFE fibrils between the nodes will shorten.

Next, Applicant argues that Myers has no discussion of a gradient between internodule distances after radial expansion. The Examiner asserts that this limitation is not claimed, and thus, this argument is not relevant to the claimed invention. Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

In response to the traversal that Banas has nodules but the claims preclude nodules, the Examiner respectfully disagrees. In particular:

- nodules are a result of multiaxial expansion forming generally circularly-shaped islands of solid PTFE. For this reason, Banas does not have nodules.
- Nodes and nodules have different meanings in the art. Nodes are merely regions of solid PTFE while nodules are circularly-shaped islands of PTFE.

- There is no example of what constitutes a no nodule structure as claimed such claim language encompasses any uniaxially expanded structure.
- The claims set forth “substantially no nodules” so it is broad due to the term “substantially.” Nonetheless, the Examiner maintains that Banas has no nodules and certainly has substantially no nodules as required by the claims.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Applicant should specifically point out the support for any amendments made to the disclosure, including the claims (MPEP 714.02 and 2163.06). Due to the procedure outlined in MPEP 2163.06 for interpreting claims, it is noted that other art may be applicable under 35 USC 102 or 35 USC 103(a) once the aforementioned issue(s) is/are addressed.

Applicant is respectfully requested to provide a list of all copending applications that set forth similar subject matter to the present claims. A copy of such copending claims is respectfully requested in response to this Office action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Prebilic whose telephone number is (703) 308-2905. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott, can be reached on (703) 308-2111. The fax phone number for this Technology Center is (703) 872-9301.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Technology Center 3700 receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.

Paul Prebilic
Paul Prebilic
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3738